

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A support fee setting method comprising the steps of:  
storing a user name and a grade for service in a  
one-to-one correspondence;

5 obtaining points derived from a job responding to an  
inquiry from a user from a job-to-point conversion table;  
obtaining the grade of the user by referring to a user  
information database that has stored the user name and the  
grade for service for the user; and

10 setting a support fee based on the grade of the user,  
the points derived, and an actual cost for a responding  
activity to the inquiry from the user.

2. The support fee setting method according to claim 1,  
15 wherein:

the points derived are converted to an amount according  
to the grade of the user by using a point conversion table,  
in which an amount is set for each grade; and

the support fee is computed as a total amount and a  
20 total of actual costs for the responding activity to the  
inquiry of the user.

3. The support fee setting method according to claim 1,  
wherein:

25 the points derived and the actual cost are stored in

a history information database in correspondence with the user name; and

the points of the user and actual cost are obtained by referring to said history information database.

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4. The support fee setting method according to claim 2, wherein:

the points derived and the actual cost are stored in a history information database in correspondence with the user name; and

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the points of the user and actual cost are obtained by referring to said history information database.

5. The support fee setting method according to claim 1, wherein:

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the total amount is a total of the amounts for a predetermined period;

a grade shifting value according to an aggregate of total amount is obtained by using a grade conversion table, in which an amount and a corresponding shift in grade are stored; and

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the grade of the user in the user information database is updated based on the grade shifting value.

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6. The support fee setting method according to claim 2,  
wherein:

the total amount is a total of the amounts for a  
predetermined period;

5 a grade shifting value according to an aggregate of  
total amount is obtained by using a grade conversion table,  
in which an amount and a corresponding shift in grade are  
stored; and

the grade of the user in the user information database  
10 is updated based on the grade shifting value.

7. The support fee setting method according to claim 3,  
wherein:

the total amount is a total of the amounts for a  
15 predetermined period;

a grade shifting value according to an aggregate of  
total amount is obtained by using a grade conversion table,  
in which an amount and a corresponding shift in grade are  
stored; and

20 the grade of the user in the user information database  
is updated based on the grade shifting value.

8. A support fee setting apparatus comprising:

a user information database which stores a user name  
25 and a grade for service in a one-to-one correspondence;

a history information database which stores actual cost and points derived from a responding activity to an inquiry from a user in correspondence with each user name; and

5 an evaluating section for setting a support fee based on the points derived and actual cost.

9. A computer readable medium storing instructions for causing a computer to perform the steps of:

10 storing a user name and a grade for service in a one-to-one correspondence;

obtaining points derived from a job responding to an inquiry from a user from a job-to-point conversion table;

15 obtaining the grade of the user by referring to a user information database that has stored the user name and the grade for service for the user; and

setting a support fee based on the grade of the user, the points derived, and an actual cost for a responding activity to the inquiry from the user.

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10. A computer program for causing the computer to perform the steps of:

storing a user name and a grade for service in a one-to-one correspondence;

25 obtaining points derived from a job responding to an

inquiry from a user from a job-to-point conversion table;

obtaining the grade of the user by referring to a user information database that has stored the user name and the grade for service for the user; and

- 5        setting a support fee based on the grade of the user, the points derived, and an actual cost for a responding activity to the inquiry from the user.

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